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CINCINNATI

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

1:15
P.M. - E.S.T.

A SERIES OF DRAMATIZATIONS OF BETTER LAND USE.

No. 180

"RIPLEY COUNTY'S 4-H CLUBS"

October 4, 1941

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER

VOICE

We took it for granted that land was everlasting;

We said ownership of the land insured security.

Tools would wear out, men would die --

But the land would remain.

ORGAN: ABRUPT DISCORD

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER, behind...

ANNOUNCER

Many lands have been covered with fine hardwood trees, but seldom have there been finer than those of Indiana. As far as the eye could see, over the plains to the north, over the distant hills to the south, stood forests of white oak and yellow poplar, tall, green, thick -- a giants carpet. Some of the best soil in the world lay under that carpet, a carpet that for centuries had stood guard, making that soil richer with each year's layer of leaves. But the land had to be cleared --

ORGAN: OMINOUS CHORD

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ANNOUNCER (cold)

Rains that once were stopped short by the thick foliage of oak and poplar now dashed hard against the bare ground, sometimes washing away in one night earth that would have grown anything you put into it. Farmers in Ripley County, Indiana, began to worry about it -- and they're finding one answer to their problems in black locust.

ORGAN: BACK HOME AGAIN IN INDIANA, behind...

NARRATOR

Give me of your bark, O Birch-tree!
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-tree!
Growing by the rushing river
Tall and stately in the valley.

Yes, the birch tree had an important place in the lives of the Indians. Today, the black locust has an important place in the lives of the farmers of Ripley County. You see, the locust belongs to one of the most widely distributed plant families in the world -- a legume-bearing family. This great family includes, in addition to other trees, beans, peas, clover, alfalfa, and peanuts. The black locust is important to Indiana.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

Young Victor Kreinhop is one Ripley County farm boy who has found the value of black locust. One day not so long ago he was working in the field with his father when...(FADE)

SOUND: Tractor slowing to a stop, then idling...

KREINHOP

Hold her up there, son. It's mighty near dark enough to lay off plowing for today.

VICTOR

Okay, dad.

KREINHOP

We can leave her here -- but cover her up good.

SOUND: Tractor motor cut off...

VICTOR

I'll get the "tarp" out.

KREINHOP

Say, there comes your friend Warren Brown.

VICTOR

I asked him to come over and spend the night. We're going to a 4-H club meeting together.

KREINHOP

Here, I'll help you with the "tarp". (GRUNTS) There. His dad sure got stung on that piece of land he bought from Joe Hanratty last fall. He's plenty worried about it, too.

VICTOR

Got a lot of gullies on it, all right. Hi, Warren!

WARREN (fading in)

Hi, Vic. Hello, Mr. Kreinhop.

KREINHOP

Hello, Warren. Well, aren't you dressed up fit to kill?

WARREN

Do you like it? Bought it at Versailles yesterday.

KREINHOP

Looks all right on you.

VICTOR

We were just talking about your dad's farm.

WARREN (whistling)

You ought to hear him talk about it, every day except Sunday. He tried to find some locust seedlings to set out, but you know, Mr. Kreinhop, he couldn't find any on the place. Nothing but old trees.

KREINHOP

I've got the same problem here, Warren. Look at that stretch over there -- nothing'll grow on it now -- and it used to be one of the best pieces of land around here, my grandpa said. I don't know what to do with places like that.

VICTOR

Why don't we raise locust seedlings ourselves?

KREINHOP

Oh, I don't think it would be practical, son.

WARREN

Well, dad could sure use some right now. He says we've got to figure out some way to take care of all this land around here that used to be good land. Says we can't let it get worse and worse, or we'll all end up in the poor house.

ORGAN: BACK HOME AGAIN IN INDIANA behind...

NARRATOR

The black locust -- life-giving tree to tired soils. The Indians of Virginia understood well the value of wood, and they often used that of the black locust for their bows. Some of the first pioneer cabins were, as old historical accounts put it, "set on four locust posts driven into the ground". In the spring it comes into its heritage of beauty, with its delicate silvery sheen of frostwork glitters, created as from some fairy artisan's dream. In its old age the twigs and branches become brittle and are easily broken by wind, storm, snow and sleet -- but it has a long life. And it is giving life to Ripley County, is the black locust.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER (cold)

They live well on the Kreinhop farm. White leghorns on green grass, alfalfa hay in the barn, flowers in the window, and at suppertime, all the healthful, nutritious food that skilled hands can grow out of Indiana soil. That night, after the 4-H club meeting...(FADE)

SOUND: Bed creaking...

VICTOR

Hey, Warren, you asleep?

WARREN

Naw, why?

VICTOR

I been thinking. You know, I've got an idea. If you'll help me....

WARREN

What is it -- spill it?

VICTOR

You know, we were talking to dad this afternoon about there not being any locust seedlings around here, and how good they are to plant on eroded soil. Well...

WARREN

Well, what?

VICTOR

I was thinking that maybe you and I could raise some.

WARREN

Aw, Vic...you've been dreaming.

VICTOR

No, I really mean it. You know how many locust seeds there are in one pound? Nearly twenty-six thousand!

WARREN

Who told you that?

VICTOR

Mr. Armstrong, in vo-ag. It was the day you were home sick. And he said we could each plant a half pound at least. Maybe we'd get as many as ten thousand trees!

WARREN

Gosh!

VICTOR

And not only that...we can sell them to dad and your father.

WARREN

We can? Say, that's not a bad idea. But imagine digging ten thousand trees.

KREINHOP (off mike)

Hey you boys in there! Quiet down and go to sleep!

ORGAN: BACK HOME AGAIN IN INDIANA, behind...

NARRATOR

The black locust isn't the most beautiful tree in the world, but it has a beauty all its own, especially when the creamy-white, fragrance-laden flowers come cascading out against the green foliage. But it was not made for beauty -- it was made for use by the farmer. You see, it grows rapidly and grows on almost any type soil. The wood is exceptionally strong and durable, and has many uses: fence-posts, poles, cross-ties, fuel wood -- and an anchor for such eroding soils as those of Ripley County. Yes, a great tree is the black locust.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER (cold)

Mr. Armstrong gave those boys good ideas, told them more about the need of seedlings in the county and how to plant them. And one day when Mr. Kreinhop was away from home, Victor and Warren...

SOUND: Digging in soil, clank of tools...

VICTOR

Hurry up, Warren...we've got to get these seed in before dad comes back.

WARREN

I'm hurrying, but you know Mr. Armstrong said we ought to fix a good seed bed, with a lot of mulch. And the rows have to be exactly three feet apart.

VICTOR

Gosh! To think we got 13,000 seed for fifty cents. If we're lucky we ought to make some money out of this.

WARREN

Sure we can.

VICTOR

I was telling Virginia Sedam about our scheme, and she wants to get in on it.

WARREN

Aw, girls are always wanting to put their noses into other people's business.

VICTOR

Maybe all of us kids ought to get together on it. You know, I'll bet we could supply all the farmers in Ripley County if we worked together. The farmers would rather buy from us right here than send 'way off for their trees, even if they thought about it.

WARREN

Maybe you're right. I know Harold Hoffman wants to try, too.

VICTOR

And we could get Charley Braley, and Inez Sedam -- and make a regular 4-H Club project out of it!

WARREN

And raise thousands and thousands of trees.

VICTOR

And start a Ripley County 4-H nursery!

WARREN

And anybody who wants locust seedlings can get them from us!

VICTOR

And raise other kinds of trees too!

ORGAN: BACK HOME AGAIN IN INDIANA, behind...

NARRATOR

Every northerner knows the white pine, every southerner knows the gnarled, moss-draped live oak of which Longfellow wrote:

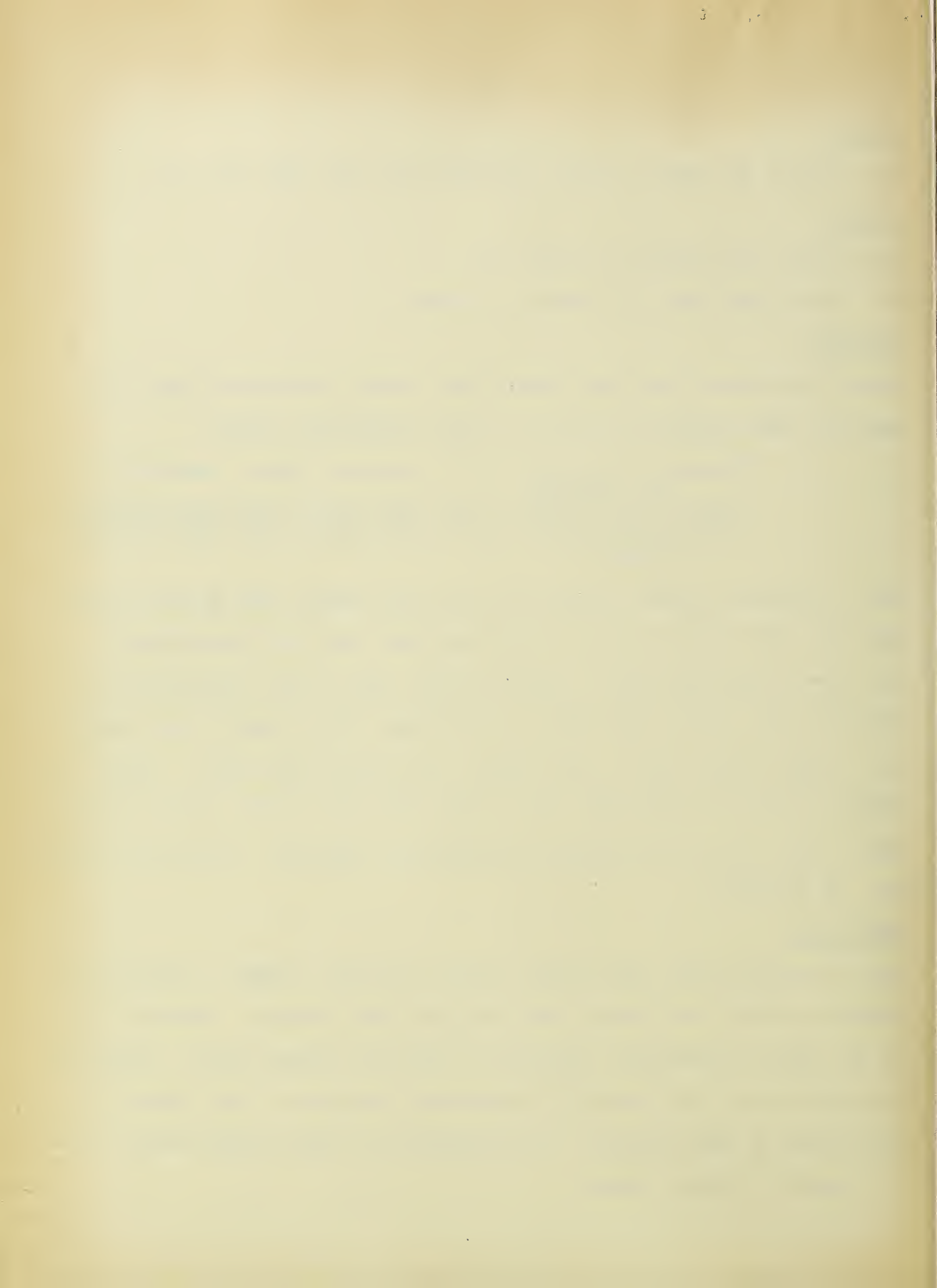
"Bearded with moss and in garments green, indistinct in
the twilight
Stand like Druids of old with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar with beards that rest on their
bosoms."

But to Indiana farmers, with all its tulip poplar and white oak and red oak, the black locust is becoming more and more significant. You know, something over a hundred years ago it was considered so valuable that plans were made to introduce black locust into Europe on a large scale, use it as timbers for the British navy. Today this legume, cousin of the bean and the pea and the clover and the alfalfa, may be the saviour of eroding farmlands in Indiana -- the black locust.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

Thus, two farm boys from Ripley County, Indiana, began a project that marks a new era in farming operations in that county. (PAUSE) This is the 180th consecutive episode of "Fortunes Washed Away", presented in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture -- and speaking for that organization, here once again is Ewing Jones.



JONES

Thanks, _____. Well, that was early May --- corn planting time. Those boys and their classmates started something that hasn't stopped yet. The days got longer -- and hotter -- the seeds sprouted, helped along with early summer rains. The word got around the county that boys and girls were raising seedlings so farmers could have plenty of black locusts to plant for soil protection, and of course, their other uses. County Agent Guy Harris gave them plenty of help...

ANNOUNCER

Such as...

JONES

Well, I don't know where all of this advice came from, but Mr. Harris and Mr. Armstrong, the vo-ag teacher ought to be given the credit. For example, they showed the youngsters how to put bands of 2-12-6 fertilizer on each side of the rows of seedlings. They told them to be sure to keep potato grass out of the rows. They helped them advertise their wares...

ANNOUNCER

And so now they have a real black locust project under way.

JONES

Wait a minute, _____, I'm not through with this advice business yet. They showed them how to heel the seedlings in, how to top prune and root prune them, and so on.

ANNOUNCER

And so now they have a real black locust project under way.

JONES

Yes, they really have. There was quite a shortage of locust seedlings last year -- but now there are thousands and thousands of fine young trees waiting to be set out on eroding hillsides of Ripley County, Indiana. The boys and girls of that 4-H club project deserve congratulations for a job well done. And now, _____, if you please, the so-called "Eleventh Commandment".

ORGAN: Sneak in DEEP RIVER

ANNOUNCER

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, so that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or be destroyed from off the face of the earth."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

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